

ORDER OF THE STATE OF WISCONSIN NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD AMENDING,
REPEALING AND RECREATING, AND CREATING RULES

The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board proposes an order to amend NR 10.01(1)(v), 10.12(4), 10.15(6); to repeal 10.31(11); to repeal and recreate NR 10.01(1)(b), (c), (g)1., (g)2., (g)3., and (u) and 10.32; and to create NR 10.01 (1)(g)4. relating to the 2006 migratory game bird seasons.

WM-26-06

Analysis Prepared by the Department of Natural Resources

Statutes Interpreted and Explanation of Agency Authority: In promulgating this rule, ss. 29.014 and 29.041, have been interpreted as allowing the department the authority to establish the migratory game bird seasons within the state as well as on and in all waters bordering the state and establish the two day youth waterfowl hunt.

Statutory Authority and Explanation of Agency Authority: Statutes that authorize the promulgation of this rule order include sections 29.014, and 227.11, Stats. These sections grant rule making authority to the department to establish and maintain open and closed seasons for hunting and provide that all rules promulgated under this authority are subject to review under ch. 227, Stats. In addition, s. 29.041, Stats., authorizes the department to promulgate rules that regulate hunting on and in all interstate boundary waters and s. 29.197, Stats., authorizes the establishment of special hunts.

Related Statute or Rule: This rule order establishes the season length and bag limits for the Wisconsin migratory game bird seasons. Each year identical Emergency and Permanent rule packages are promulgated. This process is necessary to have the seasons in place for the fall hunting season while following the federal and state rule procedures.

Plain Language Analysis: This rule order establishes the season length and bag limits for the 2006 Wisconsin migratory game bird seasons. For ducks, the state is divided into two zones each with 60-day seasons. The North season begins at 9:00 a.m. on Sept. 23 and continues for 60 consecutive days in the north, closing on Nov. 21. In the South the season begins at 9:00 a.m. on Sept. 30 and continues through Oct. 6, followed by a 7-day split, and then reopens on Oct. 14 and continues through Dec. 5. The daily bag limit is 6 ducks including no more than: 4 mallards, of which only one may be a hen, one black duck, one pintail, one canvasback, 2 wood ducks, 2 redheads and 2 scaup. Daily bag of 5 for mergansers to include not more than 2 hooded mergansers and daily bag for coots is 15. The dates of the youth hunt are Sept. 16-17.

For Canada geese, the state is apportioned into 3 goose hunting zones: Horicon, Collins and Exterior. Other special goose management subzones within the Exterior Zone include Brown County, Burnett County, Rock Prairie and the Mississippi River. Season lengths are: Collins Zone - 63 days (3 periods, first period beginning September 16); Horicon Zone - 92 days (4 periods, first period beginning September 16); Exterior Zone - 92 days (North: Sept. 16 - 22 and Sept. 23 (9:00 a.m.) - Dec. 16 and South: Sept 16 - Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 (9:00 a.m.) - Dec. 16); and Mississippi River subzone - 70 days (Sept. 30 (9:00 a.m.)) - Oct. 6 and Oct. 14 - Dec. 15). The Burnett County subzone is closed to Canada goose hunting. The statewide daily bag limit for Canada geese in the Exterior, Horicon and Collins Zones is 2 birds per day during the open seasons within each zone.

In addition to these annual regulatory issues, we propose:

- 1) Elimination of the Canada goose Horicon Intensive Management Subzone directly adjacent to the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge.
- 2) Establishing a new North/South zone boundary for Wisconsin's duck zones for the 2006-2010 period.
- 3) Establishing a 9:00 a.m. opening time for the first day of the 2006 duck season.

Summary of, and Comparison with, Existing or Proposed Federal Regulations: Under international treaty and Federal law, migratory game bird seasons are closed unless opened annually via the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) regulations process. As part of the Federal rule process, the FWS proposes a duck harvest-management objective that balances hunting opportunities with the desire to achieve waterfowl population goals identified in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP). Under this harvest-management objective, the relative importance of hunting opportunity increases as duck populations approach the goals in the NAWMP. Thus, hunting opportunity would be maximized when the population is at or above goals. Additionally, while FWS believes that the NAWMP's population goals would tend to exert a conservative influence on overall duck harvest - management, other factors, such as habitat, also need to be considered. The Regular Canada goose season is based on the allowable Mississippi Valley Population (MVP) harvest which will be determined based on the spring breeding population goal for that population and the spring

population estimate obtained from an aerial survey of the MVP breeding range. All the proposed modifications included in this rule order are consistent with these parameters and guidelines which are annually established by the Fish and Wildlife Service in 50 CFR 20.

Comparison with Rules in Adjacent States: Since migratory bird species are managed under international treaty, each region of the country is organized in a specific geographic flyway which represents a individual migratory population of migratory game birds. Wisconsin along with Minnesota, Michigan, Illinois and Iowa are members of the Mississippi Flyway. Each year the states included in the flyways meet to discuss regulations and guidelines offered to the flyways by the FWS. The FWS regulations and guidelines apply to all states within the Flyway and therefore the regulations in the adjoining states closely resemble the rules established in this rule order, and only differ slightly based on hunter desires, habitat and population management goals. However, all of these variations fall within the guidelines and sideboards established by the FWS.

Summary of Factual Data and Analytical Methodologies: For the regular duck season, a data based process called Adaptive Harvest Management is used annually by the USFWS and the Flyways to determine which of 3 framework alternatives best matches the current year's data on populations and habitat (data from the spring pond and duck goose surveys). The option of a closed season is also possible if survey conditions indicated that this was necessary for the management of duck populations. The determination of which alternative is selected is based in part on the spring wetland conditions on the breeding grounds and the Mid-Continent Mallard population. These data come from the May Pond and Breeding Waterfowl Population Surveys conducted by the USFWS and Canadian Wildlife Service on the traditional survey areas as well as surveys from select states, including Wisconsin.

The parameters of Wisconsin's regular goose season are based on our allowable harvest of the Mississippi Valley Population of Canada geese (MVP) as outlined in the MFC's MVP management plan. Each year an MVP breeding population survey is conducted in Ontario, Canada and is used to determine the annual allowable harvest. These data become available in early July and are used to determine season parameters at the July Mississippi Flyway Council (MFC) meeting.

The primary elements of Wisconsin's waterfowl regulatory process include conducting spring waterfowl surveys, participation in MFC meetings, commenting on Federal proposals and soliciting input from the public. The state process begins with Flyway meetings in February and March each year where staff provide input to the development of Federal Framework alternatives and requests related to the early seasons. In the spring, breeding waterfowl surveys are conducted in support of the regulatory process.

In early July, staff conduct a public meeting to solicit input from interest groups, including representatives of the Conservation Congress Migratory Bird Committee. At this meeting staff provide the attendees with any breeding status information we have received and we ask for any items that they wish us to pursue at the MFC meeting that will occur in mid July. Department staff then attend the MFC Technical and Council meetings (July 17-23, 2006). At this meeting staff will be provided status information and the proposed framework alternative from the USFWS. Staff then work with the other states in our Flyway to discuss and develop proposals and recommendations that are voted upon by the MFC. Proposals that are passed at the MFC meeting are forwarded to the USFWS for consideration by the Service Regulations Committee (SRC) at their meeting (July 26-27, 2006). Department staff contact the USFWS following the SRC meeting to obtain the latest season recommendations.

Once the USFWS's final Draft framework is available, Department staff can summarize waterfowl status and regulation information for Wisconsin citizens. This information is presented to the Migratory Committee of the Conservation Congress and at a public meeting (Post-Flyway Meeting) of interest groups and individuals. Staff receive input at these meetings regarding citizen suggestions for the development of Wisconsin's waterfowl regulations given the federal framework. The following week, public hearings are held around the state to solicit additional input on the proposed annual waterfowl rule.

Analysis and Supporting Documents Used to Determine Effect on Small Business or in Preparation of Economic Impact Report: These rules, and the legislation which grants the department rule making authority, do not have a significant fiscal effect on the private sector or small businesses. Additionally, no significant costs are associated with compliance to these rules.

Effects on Small Businesses: These rules are applicable to individual sportspersons and impose no compliance or reporting requirements for small businesses, nor are any design or operational standards contained in the rule.

Agency Contact Person: Kent Van Horn, 101 S. Webster St., PO BOX 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921. (608) 266-8841

Section 1. NR 10.01(1)(b), (c), (g)1., (g)2., and (g)3., are repealed and recreated to read:

Kind of Animal	Locality	Open season (all dates inclusive)	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
NR 10.01(1)(b) <i>All species of wild duck</i>	Entire state	As established by zone	As established by season and zone	Double the daily bag limit through the entire season, except opening day when it is the same as the daily bag limit.
	Northern zone as established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Nov. 21	6 ducks to include not more than 4 mallards of which only one may be a hen mallard, one black duck, one canvasback, one pintail, 2 redheads, 2 wood ducks, and 2 scaup. In addition 5 mergansers to include not more than 2 hooded mergansers.	
	Southern zone as established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Oct. 6 and Oct. 14 – Dec. 5	6 ducks to include not more than 4 mallards of which only one may be a hen mallard, one black duck, one canvasback, one pintail, 2 redheads, 2 wood ducks, and 2 scaup. In addition 5 mergansers to include not more than 2 hooded mergansers.	
NR 10.01(1)(c) <i>Coots and moorhens</i>	Entire state	Concurrent with the open season for ducks as established in par. (b)	15	30

Note: Moorhen is synonymous with gallinule.

Section 1. Continued.

Kind of Animal	Locality	Open season (all dates inclusive)	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
NR 10.01(1)(g) <i>Geese</i> 1. Canada geese and its subspecies	a. Entire state	Sept. 1 — Sept. 15	5	10
	b. All that part of the exterior zone lying within the northern zone established in s. NR 10.32 except for the subzone described in subd. 1.c and 1.d.	Sept. 16 – Sept. 22 and Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16	2	4
	c. All that part of the Brown County subzone lying within the northern zone established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 16 – Sept. 22 and Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16	2	4
	d. Burnett county subzone	None	None	None
	e. All that part of the exterior zone lying within the southern zone established in s. NR 10.32 except for the zones and subzones described in this subd. 1. f. to j.	Sept. 16 – Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16	2	4
	f. All that part of the Brown County subzone lying within the southern zone established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 16 – Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16	2	4

Section 1. Continued.

Kind of Animal	Locality	Open season (all dates inclusive)	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
	g. Horicon zone	Four permit periods:		The possession limit is equivalent to the number of carcass tags issued.
		Sept. 16 – Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Oct. 29	2	
		Sept. 23 – Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Nov. 3	2	
		Oct. 14 - Nov. 24	2	
		Oct. 28 - Dec. 16	2	
	h. Collins zone	Three permit periods:		The possession limit is equivalent to the number of carcass tags issued.
		Sept. 16 – Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Oct. 1	2	
		Oct. 2 - Oct. 22	2	
		Oct. 23 - Nov. 17	2	
	i. Rock Prairie subzone	Sept. 16 – Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16	2	4
	j. Mississippi river subzone	Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Oct. 6 and Oct. 14 – Dec. 15	2	4
	k. Entire state.	Youth waterfowl hunting season as described under par. (v).	2	4

Note: Season dates listed in this subd. may be closed early when the harvest may exceed the level authorized, according to the procedure in s. NR 10.125(6).

Section 1. Continued.

Kind of Animal	Locality	Open season (all dates inclusive)	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
2. Snow or blue and Ross' geese	Entire state	As established by zone	10	20
	a. All that part of the exterior zone lying within the northern zone established in s. NR 10.32 except for the subzone described in subd. 2.b and 2.c.	Sept. 16 – Sept. 22 and Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	b. All that part of the Brown County subzone lying—within the northern zone established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 16 – Sept. 22 and Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	c. Burnett county subzone	Sept. 16 – Sept. 22 and Sept. 23 at 9:00a.m. – Dec. 16		
	d. All that part of the exterior zone lying within the southern zone established in s. NR 10.32 except for the zones and subzones described in this subd. 2. e. to i.	Sept. 16 – Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	e. All that part of the Brown County subzone lying within the southern zone established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 16 – Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	f. Horicon zone	Sept. 16 – Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	g. Collins zone	Sept. 16 – Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Nov. 17		

Section 1. Continued.

Kind of Animal	Locality	Open season (all dates inclusive)	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
	h. Rock Prairie subzone	Sept. 16 – Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	i. Mississippi river subzone	Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Oct. 6 and Oct. 14 – Dec. 15		
	j. Entire state.	Youth waterfowl hunting season as described under par. (v).	10	20
3. All other geese	Entire state	As established by zone	1 white-fronted goose	2 white-fronted geese
	a. All that part of the exterior zone lying within the northern zone established in s. NR 10.32 except for the subzone described in subd. 3.b and 3.c.	Sept. 22 and Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	b. All that part of the Brown County subzone lying—within the northern zone established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 22 and Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	c. Burnett county subzone	Sept. 22 and Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	d. All that part of the exterior zone lying within the southern zone established in s. NR 10.32 except for the zones and subzones described in this subd. 3. e. to i.	Sept. 22 through Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	e. All that part of the Brown County subzone lying within the southern zone established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 22 through Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		

Section 1. Continued.

Kind of Animal	Locality	Open season (all dates inclusive)	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
	f. Horicon zone	Sept. 22 through Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	g. Collins zone	Sept. 16 through Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Nov. 17		
	h. Rock Prairie subzone	Sept. 22 through Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	i. Mississippi river subzone	Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Oct. 6 and Oct. 14 - Dec. 15		
	j. Entire state.	Youth waterfowl hunting season as described under par. (v).	1 white-fronted goose	2 white-fronted geese

Section 2. NR 10.01(1)(g)4. is created to read:

Kind of Animal	Locality	Open season (all dates inclusive)	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
NR 10.01(1)(g)4. Brant	Entire state	As established by zone	1	2
	a. All that part of the exterior zone lying within the northern zone established in s. NR 10.32 except for the subzone described in subd. 3.b and 3.c.	Sept. 16 – Sept. 22 and Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	b. All that part of the Brown County subzone lying—within the northern zone established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 16 – Sept. 22 and Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	c. Burnett county subzone	Sept. 16 – Sept. 22 and Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		

Section 2. Continued.

Kind of Animal	Locality	Open season (all dates inclusive)	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
	d. All that part of the exterior zone lying within the southern zone established in s. NR 10.32 except for the zones and subzones described in this subd. 3. e. to i.	Sept. 16 through Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	e. All that part of the Brown County subzone lying within the southern zone established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 16 through Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	f. Horicon zone	Sept. 16 through Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	g. Collins zone	Sept. 16 through Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Nov. 17		
	h. Rock Prairie subzone	Sept. 16 through Sept. 29 and Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Dec. 16		
	i. Mississippi river subzone	Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Oct. 6 and Oct. 14 - Dec. 15		
	j. Entire state.	Youth waterfowl hunting season as described under par. (v).	1	2

Section 3. NR 10.01(1)(u) is repealed and recreated to read:

NR 10.01(1)(u) *Falconry special season*. Any person possessing a valid falconry permit and hunting license shall be restricted to the following migratory game bird seasons:

Kind of Animal	Locality	Open season (all dates inclusive)	Daily Bag Limit	Possession Limit
1. All species of wild ducks, mergansers and coots	Northern zone as established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 16– Sept. 17, Sept. 23 at 9:00 a.m. – Nov. 21 and Jan. 14 – Feb. 27	3 in aggregate with those species listed under subd. 2	6 in aggregate with those species listed under subd. 2
	Southern zone as established in s. NR 10.32	Sept. 16 – Sept. 17, Sept. 30 at 9:00 a.m. – Oct. 6, Oct. 14 – Dec. 5 and Jan. 14 – Feb. 27	3 in aggregate with those species listed under subd. 2	6 in aggregate with those species listed under subd. 2
2. Moorhens, Sora rail, Virginia rail, common snipe and woodcock	Entire state	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16	3 in aggregate with those species listed under subd. 1	6 in aggregate with those species listed under subd. 1
3. Geese	Within the zones and subzones established in s. NR 10.31	Concurrent with the open season for geese established in par. (g) for each zone or subzone	As established in par. (g) for each zone or subzone	As established in par. (g) for each zone or subzone

Section 4. NR 10.01(1)(v) is amended to read:

NR 10.01(1)(v) *Special youth waterfowl hunt event*. Persons 12 years of age or older but under 16 years of age who possess a certificate of accomplishment under s. 29.591, Stats., or its equivalent from another state or province, may hunt all species of wild duck, mergansers, geese, coots, and ~~gallinules~~ moorhens for 2 consecutive days starting on September 17. Approvals under ch. 29, Stats., are not required pursuant to s. 29.197 (1), Stats., except for registration in the harvest information program under s. NR 10.12 (11) and a Canada goose hunting permit for the zone where goose hunting, as listed in par. (g) 1., if hunting Canada geese. Daily bag limits are those described under pars. (b), (c) and (g) and all other waterfowl hunting regulations apply. Hunters shall be accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older. One adult may not accompany more than 2 hunters.

Section 5. NR 10.12(4) is amended to read:

NR 10.12(4) SPECIAL BLIND RESTRICTIONS. The department may restrict hunters to certain blind locations within the Collins, Eldorado, Grand River, Pine Island and Theresa state wildlife areas by posted notice. If posted, maps shall be provided by the department indicating where blind sites are located. The following blind restrictions apply to goose hunting in the Horicon zone beginning in 2011:

Section 6. NR 10.15(6) is amended to read:

NR 10.15(6) WATERFOWL SEASON. No person may ~~place a hunting blind~~ hunt waterfowl within 75 yards of the Horicon national wildlife refuge boundary during the open season for hunting waterfowl.

